POLICY AND GLOBAL AFFAIRS NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

Quarterly Performance Report to USAID Period 32 of 40: March 20, 2006 - June 19, 2006

RESEARCH SUPPORT PROGRAM PCE-A-00-98-00008-00

I. CURRENT STATUS

Primary emphasis this quarter has been on preparing the revised 26 cycle of approved projects for action. This included all the preliminary activities required before AID can take the necessary steps for awarding contracts. These activities as well as other necessary activities during the quarter are described below.

- Provided draft conditions of the MERC 27 preproposal committee meeting to sponsor, and draft letters were prepared.
- Processed MERC 27 preproposal acceptance, reject, and M27-016, M27-038, and M27-058 fast track letters.
- Updated the Research Support Program website with current MERC preproposal guidelines.
- Created binder for the Fall Review 26 Summary of Results and Reviewer Expertise.
- The last of the final summaries were provided to USAID for the MERC and most of the CDR peer review panels of October 2005.
- Processed all full proposal summaries for MERC26 (including declined projects) to check for compliance with preproposal conditions.
- Reviewed and proposed corrections and changes in drafted approval, resubmit, and declined MERC26 letters including provisos in the approval letters.
- Prepared draft approval, resubmit, and decline letters for MERC26.
- Prepared draft revision of the MERC Budget Guidelines.
- The mailing of decision packages for the Review 26 cycle has been initiated including mailing out approval, resubmit, and decline letters for MERC26.
- Mailed CDR announcement about the discontinued funding for C27 preproposals and C26 full proposals.
- Mailed CDR25 decline letters.
- Updated the electronic files with Review 26 proposal and Review 27 preproposal decision letter information.

- Received, checked, and reviewed the responses to provisos for some of the MERC26 and MERC27 fasttrack proposals; took appropriate action for incomplete responses.
- Continued to update the funded database as copies of grant agreements and amendments for CDR and MERC arrive.
- Continued to receive and process reports from researchers with active grants and inform the US Embassy in Israel upon receipt.
- Continue to summarize semi-annual reports from active projects and transmit summaries to the US Embassy in Israel and to the sponsor.
- Continued ongoing communications with researchers, providing them with program guidelines and answering questions about grants, the review process or program policy.
- Maintain USAID files and order additional supplies as necessary.

II. DISCUSSION

This quarter has been devoted to finishing the drafts of the CDR26 and MERC26 decline summaries/decision sheets, taking the myriad actions necessary to finalize approved projects for action by the sponsor, and preparing for the next round of reviews. We are current with all our responsibilities. A large amount of time has been devoted to the Response to Provisos that each year are greater in number, much broader, and much more detailed than in previous years. This report marks the completion of eight years of our cooperative agreement. As mentioned previously, we continue to take pride in being associated with such a worthwhile USAID program and are devoted to contributing to its success. We will continue to give the program our careful attention and full cooperation with USAID.

III. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

While the MERC responses to provisos have arrived and been acted upon, there are still many remaining issues to be completed in the next quarter. Much of our attention will be devoted to preparing for the next cycle of reviews. This will involve the formation of many panels and reviews of the MERC27 proposals submitted to the MERC program. Specialized scientists will be located who are available at the appropriate time and are willing to donate their time to the review process.